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Spiritual Prospective

To the Reader.

G L A S S.

Through which the Rulers and people of England, may plainly see those things which concerns their peace.

Being a manifestation from the Spirit of God, in love to all people,

By one that desires the prosperity of truth, and the peace of the Nation.

W. Smith, of Beeston in Nottinghamshire

In him was Life, and the Life was the Light of Men, and the Light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not,

Jo. 1. 4. 5.

For God who commanded the Light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, 2 Cor. 4. 6.

A

A Philosophical Inquiry

To the Reader.

READER.

IF absolute necessity did not constrain to make a discovery of that which doth occasion desolation, and so inform all concerned wherein they wrong both themselves and others, and so to set the truth before the face of all people, it would be more satisfaction to sit in silence than in such a manner to appear in publick, and though the intention be ill in that love which endureth all things, yet where severity oppresseth their innocency, it causeth them to manifest the truth on their own behalfs, and also for the benefit of such by whom they are oppressed, and for the glory and to the matter published which in this little book is contained, for if any conclude that the innocent Quakers suffer as evil doers, they make their conclusion without a good understanding, and none are to conclude a matter until it be fully cleared by sufficient evidence, and whoever thou art into whose hands this little book may be ordered, thou art desired to read it or hear it, in meekness, and so consider the matter in it as becometh true wisdom and sound judgement, and so by thy own temperance and moderation, thou may reap profit, and do thyself good, where wilt.

W. S.

A Spiritual Prospective Glass, &c.

IT is not to be questioned but the Rulers and people of England do acknowledge and confess that Christ Jesus is their Redeemer and Saviour; & that they are Christians through the Faith they have in his death and Resurrection, and therefore to be hoped that the ensuing matter may meet with better respect and entertainment in Relation to Christ an object of Christian prayer is always an acceptable thing to a Christian Nature and life, because nature is delighted in that which is in agreement with it, and the first being stated as a thing not questioned, the latter may be more fully opened and presented for the harmony will not break where the matter is substantial in its ground and nature, for whatsoever breaketh harmony doth alter the course of Nature by malignity, for Christianity is concurrent in all passages without any malignity that self to let or hinder, and in this Harmony the Lord God hath his glory, and where it is not so it is but Christianity professed which wanteth the substantial ground and nature of a Christian Life, and the Title of a Spiritual Prospective Glass comprehends the whole matter by allusion for most people know that it is the property of a visible Prospective Glass to discover visible things plainly, which otherwise are obscure, and not to be clearly discerned, and by that means many comes to be satisfied concerning a thing by beholding it so fully as to know what it is even to such all people come to know and be satisfied concerning spiritual things, by beholding them in the Light and Spirit of God, for spiritual things are spiritually discerned, and the Light and Spirit of God doth discover spiritual things as they are in nature and life, and in that discovery there is no deceivableness by any false presentation or object, but a true discovery of the substance of spiritual things, by which the Soul hath great benefit and comfort, and with this blessed

iced Light and Spirit *Abraham* see Chrills day and rejoyced, and
 with the same light and spirit *Moses* see to the beginning, and re-
 hearsed the mighty works of God in the beginning and he see
 Christ the great Prophet who was to be Railed up like unto him,
 and commended that he in all things should be heard, and so
 see the beginning and the ending in the light and spirit of God,
 and all the Prophets and holy men of God, see the Heavenly and
 spiritual things in the same light and spirit of God, and *John* see
 the Lamb of God, and said: *behold him, and some beheld his glory*
as the Glory of the only begotten of the Father full of grace and
truth, and so in the light and spirit of God all the Holy men of
 God discerned spiritual things, and then they did not look at
 things that were temporall, but at things that were eternal, and
 this were a true presentation or object which did not deceive the
 beholders, and by believing in it according to the dispensation
 of God they came to wincke Salvation and Eternal life, and so
 people must come to the light and spirit of God in themselves
 if they would see spiritual things, for flesh and blood doth not
 reveal spiritual things, and they therefore to see spiritual things
 in that nature they deceive themselves, and this hath been in ages
 past, and is at this day the ground of error concerning spiritual
 things, for what man can see spiritual things with a natural eye,
 there is no testimony given by the holy men of God, that they
 see the things of God with flesh and blood or a natural eye, but
 said, *The natural Man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God,*
because they are spiritually discerned, and no man knows the things of
God but the spirit of God, and here the natural man is to stop and
 stand still and be quiet, he cannot see spiritual things, nor receive
 spiritual things, nor judge of spiritual things and so not fit to
 meddle with such weighty concerns, for seeing by Scripture
 testimony that no man knows the things of God but by the spirit
 of God, then all that would know the things of God are to find the
 spirit of God in themselves, and as the spirit is minded & obeyed,
 it teacheth and instructeth in the things of God which it knoweth,

and so the things of God are revealed by his spirit and taught by his spirit, and they that receive the Spirit they know the things of God in it, and here is the spiritual mind in which is life and peace, and he that hath a spiritual mind is a spiritual man, and that man is fit to judge of spiritual things, because he sees them in the spirit, and knows them in the spirit, and therefore able to give sound judgement which the natural man cannot do, for the natural man runs into error by believing in false objects, which darkness presenteth to his view, and as he receives it into his beliefs, he holds it in his judgement and opinion as if it was the truth, for error is a mistaking of things as to the truth that is in them, and that was the *Sadducees* condition concerning the Resurrection, and Christ said unto them, ye do err not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God, for if they had known the Scriptures and the power of God, they would have understood the truth of the Resurrection, and not erred in judgement and opinion, for it was their judgement that there was no Resurrection, and that was their error or mistake, and Christ opened the truth unto them, saying, God is not the God of the dead but of the living, so truth is not to be concluded as to what men hold in their judgement and opinion, seeing Christ revealed it as an error in the *Sadducees*, but that which is revealed in the light and spirit of God, may be safely concluded to be the truth in which is no error, for he that is the light and truth did see the *Sadducees* error in what they held in their judgement and opinion concerning the Resurrection, and when he gave his opinion for people to give up their beliefs to the judgement and opinion of natural men as to spiritual things, there can be no more safety in so doing then for one blind man to be led or guided by another that is as blind as himself, therefore I shall speak in plainness to the Rulers and People of England for their information in the things of God, if happily the light may shine out of darkness in such where it shines in darkness, and by darkness not comprehended that it is seem good to the Lord, the day may break in them, and the Sun of righteousness may arise with healing under his Wings.

Friends, unto you all that are striving against the blessed appearance of Christ Jesus the Lord of Life, and Prince of Peace, this matter is offered in love to your souls and to the whole nation, and though I well know that judgement lieth not where wickedness aboundeth, So I also know that God would not the death of a sinner but rather he would turn from his wickedness and live, and this I deliver as a testimony for God and in this matter I shall not appear like *Tertullus* the flourishing Orator, but like *Paul* the plain and true Apostle, for in such weighty concerns the Fear of the Lord is to be minded, and his counsel and wisdom to be obeyed and followed, and in that I shall speak to the witnesses of God in all your consciences.

1. The Almighty and Everlasting God created all things good & man in that state was blessed and happy in the paradise of God, and there his Soul enjoyed the benefit and comfort in the life and power by which it was nourished,

2. The good and blessed state in which man was created he lost by disobedience, and so was driven out of paradise to his souls sorrow and heaviness, and that is the state of all people in the first *Adams* transgression.

3. The Almighty and Everlasting God promised a seed to break the Serpents head that tempted man forth of his good and blessed state in which he was created, that man might be again restored into his first being of life.

4. The seed promised was Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God, who by the arm of his power is able to destroy the Devil and his Work and to bring Man again unto God and the good.

5. The holy men of God in all ages did bear witness of the power of the seed in working deliverance from the power of the Serpent, by which they came to witness Gods promise fulfilled, and to live in the joy of his Salvation.

6. There is no nation, people or Language unto whom the seed doth not give light, for the seed is Christ, and Christ lighteth every

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let one that comes into the world, and the Light of a Witness
in every ones conscience unto that which is good, and against that
which is evil.

7. Man believing and obeying the testimony of the Light of
Christ in his conscience worketh in power for his deliverance
out of darkness: where his Soul is in bondage, sorrow and hea-
viness, and restores into the good again where the Soul comes
into peace, joy, and happiness, and so Christ is the restorer of
grace to dwell in.

Now as you profess your selves to be believers in Christ, and
so to be Christians, it is necessary that you consider how far you
can witness the promise of God fulfilled in you by the power
of Christ, and that you may fully examine your own conditions
these following questions may be useful to you.

1. Do you believe in the Light with which Christ enlighteneth
you.

2. Do you obey the Testimony of Light in your own Con-
sciences.

3. Do you witness your sin done away, and the serpents head
broken.

4. Do you witness deliverance out of darkness and the
house of bondage.

5. Do you witness liberty in the power of an endless life.

6. Do you witness the righteousness of Christ to be made your
righteousness.

7. Do you witness unity and peace in the righteousness of
Christ.

8. Do you witness the goodness of God to satisfy your
Souls.

9. Do you follow peace with all men and holiness.

10. Do you feel the peace of God rule in your hearts.

11. Do you love your enemies and do good to those that hate
you.

12. Do

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Examine your selves and your condition by these few questions, for these good and holy things are witnessed by such as are regenerated and born again, and except you be regenerated and born again, you cannot enter into the Kingdom of God, and can your Souls be satisfied out of Gods Kingdom, and is it now the greatest concernment to know an entrance into the Kingdom of God, where the Soul comes to be satisfied in rest and peace and comfort and happiness, and so there is a coming out of the first Adams transgression, as the light and power of the second Adam is obeyed in manifestation and operation, for the operation of the light and power of Christ Jesus: the second Adam makes a new creature, and they that receive Christ in his light and power to come into Union with him they are new creatures, and new creatures are Christians in Nature and Life, and the Spirit beareth witness with their spirits that they are the sons of God, and in such all old things are done away, and all things are become new, and so they are in the New Covenant with a new heart, and a new Spirit which God gives them, and puts into them, and these are the people who now worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh, and so they answer the life and practice of new creatures, and Christians in times past, and this keeps the harmony and doth not break it, for the same righteousness, Unity, and Peace, runs as a natural stream in the same light, Spirit, life, and power that is in Christ Jesus, and if you come to love this, and live in this and walk in this, your souls will come into Righteousness, Unity and Peace, and so shall be a comfortable and happy being; but if you gain-say: resist, and withstand the light of Christ when it is testified in your consciences, and love darkness rather than light, your souls are in sorrow, and heaviness, what bevel you may profess of Christianity, in your judgment and opinion, for there can be no sound judgement or opinion, but in the Light and power of Christ Jesus, and they

that resist the Light, they err in what they hold, as to their Judgement and Opinion in spiritual things; for the ground of Error is ignorance, and the ground of ignorance is darkness, and then such as love darkness rather then light must needs live in Error and not in the truth whatever they profess, and Righteousness, unity and peace will never spring out of darkness and error, for where ignorance maintains an error it usually maintains it by violence and force against such as hold the contrary, and that will never do the thing that is right, and so cannot be Righteous or bring forth Righteousness, nor never will bring into unity and peace; but provokes unto Wrath, Envy, and Strife, and so it is plain that error in Judgement and opinion touching the way and worship of God is the very ground of persecution, for as darkness vaileth the understanding from the true knowledge of spiritual things, so it causeth ignorance and error in Judgement and opinion, and then worketh violently against all dissenters or opposers of that which it formeth and setteth up to be observed as the way and worship of God, and this breaks the harmony that stands in Righteousness, Unity, and peace, and can never bring comfort and happiness to any Soul, and is it the way and manner of Christians to practice the way of the heathens by whom they were first persecuted, and many destroyed, for did not the heathen Emperors cause the Christians to be persecuted and destroyed for above 3 hundred years after Christ? and doth it become Christians to walk in the heathens way of outrage and cruelty one amongst another, or should they not love one another as Christ commandeth and live in Righteousness, Unity and peace together, and so judge the Heathens cruelty and not justify them in it?

O that the Rulers of *England* would stand still and consider the beginning and end of persecution in matters of Faith and Religion, for if the beginning of persecution be well pleasing unto God, then *Cains* slaying his brother is no sin, but that *Cains* action did not please God is plain from the displeasure of God against C gaine

ginslin, & the judgment of God that came upon him therefore
Can slaying his Brother is a sin that doth not go unpunished and
 son. If not the beginning of ending of persecution that can in any
 wise be possible to those that are exercised in it, and the Inno-
 cent *Quakers* could not have believed that the King and great
 Council of Parliament would have put such an opportunity into
 the hands of violent persons to turn their efforts for worshipping
 the living God, for it is the living God that those people do wor-
 ship, and they worship him in the spirit and in the truth which is
 peaceable, whatsoever you do reckon their meetings to be in your
 natural eye, & seeing that such a violent use is made of the fact
 as tendeth to the utter ruine of honest peaceable Subjects, it can
 no way be dishonourable to your dignity to repeal it & make it
 void, which if you do not your agreement in the execution will
 sit in the consequence, and that will fall hard upon your
 selves when the Lord makes inquisition after such as spoils his
 people, but if you do repeal it and make it void as seeing how
 destructive it is to the Nation in the rising and execution of it, then
 you will manifest some tenderness of heart in your great assem-
 bly, and also demonstrate that it was not by you enacted with
 that intention as it hath in the execution, and this would be
 great satisfaction unto the Nation, for what conclusion can you
 make to your selves by suffering such proceedings, or do you
 conclude that it may be a benefit unto such as comes under the
 punishment by working their Reformation, if there be neither
 benefit to your selves nor those you punish as offenders it cannot
 be beneficial unto any others, for that by which any hath benefit
 must come as a clear thing, or otherwise it is no benefit at all, for
 if a man must answer as much or more in consideration of what
 he receives, he hath no benefit but rather loseth by what he re-
 ceives, and if such amongst whom fines are to be divided must
 answer the receipt unto God with a greater consideration, they
 will be losers by what they receive, for what doth it profit a
 man to gain the whole World and lose his own Soul, or what shall a

as give in exchange for his Soul, so it a man loose his own Soul
 in consideration of what he receives in such a manner for his benefit: his loss is far greater then his gain and therefore no benefit at all unto him, and that no benefit can come to the sufferer by working reformation is very clear, for violence was never known to work a true reformation in any, and seeing no benefit will arise to any party according to what may be expected, then it is altogether an unprofitable thing which unto Christians should be detestable, and however you may be encouraged by Prelates and Clergy in such a work upon a Christian account, yet you will not find it to your Souls benefit and comfort, and they that encourage you in any thing that will not bring comfort to your Souls, you have good cause to let there counsel fall at your feet, and not to make it a head to rule over you, for indeed most men of that sort have sought for worldly preeminence, honour and profit, for many ages past, and the more you adhere to their Counsel, the more will they seek their own interest by you, and get domination over you, for how doth the Pope exalt himself over Emperors and Kings, who by the Emperors was first enstalled in his pontifical dignity, and so expectance may teach you that it is not altogether your safety to set up Prelates and Clergy above you, or to follow their advice and counsel in things that properly concerns your own authority, but rather mind your own power in all civil concerns, and there is nothing further wherein either they or you are to concern yourselves by the power of any outward law, and as you mind the Light of Christ Jesus it will direct you to act in your proper places where by your Souls may have peace and comfort, and that counsel you are to receive by which you may come to allow to all tender consciences the just privilege of liberty in things pertaining to their consciences, and that will settle righteousness, unity and peace in every conscience that is well disposed towards God, and so the soul will come to live in comfort as in a day of prosperity, and there you will know the things that belongs to your peace.

Now

Now in things of such weighty concernment there ought to be great regard to the well being of a Nation, for there is your proper place to stand and rule not to meddle with spiritual things, but look after the well being of the nation, and to suppress vice and vanity that occasioneth mischief an injury, here stand in your places and exercise your power to the punishment of evil doers there your authority is to the self and not in punishing tender peaceable people for their conscience towards God, for persecution will never bring Righteousness, Unity and peace to a Nation, but always disturbs and disquiets the most settled condition, so thus the consequence of persecution is for the most part strife and sedition, and yet under the colour of suppressing seditious meetings persecution is carried on as the best means to do it, and so that which is evil in it self would make a good thing to appear evil that it might appear against it as evil to make it self appear as if it was good, for this is to be observed that persecution never appeared against any thing as if it was good, but as if it was evil, and so hath always had a cloak to cover it in its greatest fury, for such as are persecuted do always suffer as such that is the account of that spirit which persecuteth deserve the thing that is done for it is the general cry at this day by those that acts persecution or joyn with it, you deserve to suffer that will not obey the Kings Laws, and so would appear as if they were doing a good work with their violent hands, and will concern the King and his Laws in what they do, but such never yet looked thorow the *Spiritual Prospective Glass* to see things as they are, and therefore they follow evil as if it was good, and would suppress the good as if it was evil, and so are evil doers, and who will conclude that an evil doer obeys the Kings laws, and if it be those that do well that are such, then the Innocent *Quakers* do not deserve that punishment as some inflicteth upon them under colour of disobeying the Kings Laws, and what work doth this make in the Nation, doth it not make the nation like broken shattered bones

bones when so many honest people and peaceable subjects have their Estates torn from them by violent hands, and many of considerable Estates have little left, and no encouragement to begin again, and many families lies distressed for want of that which should have been their outward Relief, can ever such things bring the Nation into righteounesse, unity, and peace, or doth it not wast it like a Consumption upon the Natural body? and what pleasure or delight can you have in such a work who joyn hands to perform it? are you not smitten in your Consciences for your doings, and is not that the hand of the Lord that smites you, and so you cause the hand of the Lord to turn against you, and so it costs it will be terrible to you, for you are not like to prosper that persecutes the innocent, and where is there a president in any nation of such actions: doth any Nation ruine the Estates one of another in such a manner, surely you are not come nigh to righteounesse, unity and peace, whose hands are busied in this destructive work and therefore a *Spiritual Profperings* is set to every mans eye, that you may look thowow it and see the nature of truth, and the righteounesse, unity, and peace contained in it, that ye may come to love the truth and live in it to the comfort of your Souls that is righteounesse, unity, and peace; may run through the Nation to the satisfaction of those that dwell therein, and that it may be so I shall state a few particulars to be observed.

1. Mind the Light of Christ Jesus to be guided by it, and do unto all men as you would be done by.
2. Be tender towards all that fear God and work righteousness for their encouragement.
3. Ordain no Laws that may be of a compelling or restraining power in things pertaining to God and the Conscience, and reveal such as be in force for any such end or purpose.
4. Allow the Supremacy and Authority of Church Government into Christ Jesus the head.

over. Ordain such *Laws* as may re-form the vain lives of such as
 fear not God, and to right such as suffer wrong, and to preserve
 outward Government in peace.

Here is your bound for, beyond which you are not to go, for
 God doth not allow you to go beyond civil concernments, and
 if you meddle with any thing further you go too far, so stop where
 the Lord bounds you, and act where he allows you, do not en-
 deavour upon his prerogative and right, do not meddle with the
 conscience which belongeth onely to his power, let that alone as
 a thing too weighty for you, for you know no more of it then
 what you owe down judgement and opinion may perfwade you and
 so may ere in your doings, and if you err in your doings you
 cannot do the thing that is right, and therefore better let all a-
 lone that is out of your reach, then reach too far, and hurt both
 your selves and others.

Now if you mind the light of Christ to be guided by it, you
 will plainly see that what is here briefly stated doth much conduce
 to the settlement of the Nation in Righteousness, unity and peace,
 for why should Religion be an occasion of trouble and disquiet-
 nels to a Nation; may not people enjoy their own Faith and live
 in quietness with their neighbors, and love their neighbors, and so
 the nation may live in righteousness, unity and peace together as
 men though they do not all observe the same things in practice
 and worship towards God, and would not this heal the broken
 shattered bones of the nation, and make it a lovely nation in the
 eyes of all people, and hath not *England* been counted a lovely
 nation upon the account of Christian profession, and now to de-
 form it self with such a black Image of persecution will make the
 praise of it fall with great dishonor, for what nation doth make a
 larger profession of Christianity then *England*, is it not looked up-
 on by many to be started in a Christian profession after the best
 reformation, and shall it now deform its beauty by putting on a
 countenance of persecution, for the best reformation, and perfec-
 tion hath not the same countenance and beauty, and hath not
 the

the Lord shewed kindness unto *England* above many other nations, hath he not sent of late years many tender visitations and warnings by many of his faithful servants, doth not his light shine in *England* to expel and drive away those mists and fogs, that have overlaid the nation, and under which the people have been scattered as sheep having no shepherds, and were there not a time when Christ began to upbraid some Cities wherein most of his mighty works were done because they repented not, and did he not lay concerning *Chorazin* and *Bethsaida*, if the mighty works which were done in you, had been done in *Tyre* and *Sidon*, they would have repented long agoe in *Sack-Cloath* and *Ashes*, but I say unto you it shall be more tollerable for *Tyre* and *Sidon* in the day of Judgement then for you, *Mat. 11*, (mark) more tollerable for *Tyre* and *Sidon*, in the day of Judgement then for *Chorazin* and *Bethsaida*, because his mighty works which were manifest there did not cause them to repent, and have not mighty works been done in late years in *England* by the power of Christ, which if such mighty works had been done in some other nations they might have repented long agoe in *Sack-Cloath* and *Ashes*, and some in *England* that have believed in the mighty works which Christ hath wrought by his spirit and power and have repented and are turned to the Lord, and businesses peace and blessing is with them, surely all people of all sorts had need to be serious in considering this weighty matter, for if you persecute the innocent who are turned unto the Lord, you will do despite unto him when you should require his kindness shewed unto you by walking worthy of it and do you not often request of the Lord to spare his people, and bless his Inheritance and do you spoil his people and curse his Inheritance or do you take your selves to be only his people and Inheritance that you would have him spare and bless, and those that differ from you to be spoiled by your hands, and cursed by excommunication as not being his people and inheritance? you must either so conclude or otherwise you your selves are contrary to that which

you desire the Lord would do, and if you spoil those whom the Lord spareth, and curse those whom the Lord blesteth, do you not commit a greater offence against him, yea an offence of a far higher degree against God then meeting peaceably together to worship him can be an offence against you to the witness of God in you all I speak, to that which is true and just and righteous from which truth and justice and righteousness proceed, that truly justly and righteously tryes and judges all offences, and unto that the innocent *Quakers* appeals which will clear their innocency from any offences in meeting together to worship and serve the Lord, for in times past, some said it is vain to serve God, and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance (or according to the Hebrew, observation) or that we have walked mournfully (or according to the Hebrew, in black) before the Lord of Hosts, and then they called the proud happy and they that wrought wickedness were set up, and they that tempted God were delivered (mark then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord bearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name, and they shall be mine saith the Lord of Hosts in that day when I make up my jewels (or according to the Greeks, special treasures) and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him, Malachi. 3. (mark) here is the Lord's people plainly described, and they are not those that said, it is vain to serve God, and disesteemed his Ordinance or Observation, and called the proud happy, and wrought wickedness, and tempted God, he did not own thele to be his people that he would spare, but those that feared the Lord, and spake often one to another, and thought upon his name; they shall be mine saith the Lord, and I will spare them, [mark] the Lord owns his people that he will spare those that fear him, and keeps his Ordinance, or Observation, and thinks upon his name, they are now his people that he spareth though men spoil them, his Jewels, or special treasures that he maketh up, who are born of the seed that he blesteth for

far ever, and those are Gods chosen Inheritance that are under his blessing, and he bleisseth those that bleisseth them, and curseth those that curseth them, for this was his promise to his seed, saying, *I will bleisseth them that bleisseth thee, and curse them that curse thee, and in thee shall all Nations of the earth be blessed,* and here you may see through the *Spiritual perspective glass*, who are the Lords people & inheritance which he spareth and bleisseth, & if you spoil his people whom he spareth do you not highly offend him, and if you curse by excommunication his inheritance whom he bleisseth do you not highly provoke him, therefore take heed what ye do in making the Lords people and inheritance to be offenders by your law, and so proceed against them as Offenders, to Spoil them and Curse them, it concerns you to be serious and not to sport with such things, but mind what you desire of the Lord in your own words and perform it on your own parts, and do not spoil his people and curse his inheritance any more, for they are spared and blessed of God, and he will not hold such guiltless as spoileth and curseth those whom he spareth and bleisseth, for do ye not absolutely fight against God when ye entreat them evil, and are not such enemies unto God that fight against him, and did ever any fight against God and prosper, surely you generally forget *Gammaliels* counsel, and it would do well if some amongst you would offer it in your great assembly to put you in mind of it, or it may be hoped that all are not like minded in wilful purposes to injure the innocent, and it was a noble spirit in *Gammaliel* that moved him to stand up in the Council when they were proposing to slay the Apostles, and there to give his advice to stop the fury of the purpose, & to him they agreed, and so it was feasible a twice which prevented the execution of such a cruel design, and will Christians condemn *Gammaliel* for being a friend to the Apostles, when the *Jews* agreed to him, and by their agreement did manifest that they were not so wilful in their purpose but that a sound and weighty judgement might prevail with them to alter their purpose, and to by experience it is found better for Rulers to let things alone that concerns Faith and Religion for if any thing be of man it will come to naught of it self without laws to

suppress it; and if it be of God there is no law of men can destroy the thing though the bodies and estates of such as have faith in it may be exposed to great sufferings for it, and no God men will disapprove of Gamaliels counsel who stood in a good consideration of the matter, and not willing that a wilful purpose should be judge in such a weighty concernment, and will you say the Council did not do well in agreeing to Gamaliel? I hope not, and if you conclude they did well then do you agree to him now in your great assembly, for if they who at that time did not believe in Christ nor the Apostles doctrine were so easily inreated to let the Apostles alone and not to slay them as was purposed by them, then how much more should such as profess a belief in Christ and the Apostles doctrine be perswaded and intreated to let those alone that now believe in Christ, and live in the Apostles spirit, life, and Doctrine, (this reaches the witness of God in you all if you will but bow your ear to the council of it, for the wisdom from above is pure and peaceable and gentle and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality) (or according to the greek, without wronging) and without hypocrisy, 1a. 3. 17. (*make*) the wisdom from above is of a pure, peaceable, gentle nature that may easily be increased and so the mercy and good fruits are in it where none are wronged and that was the principle that moved in Gamaliel by the appointment of God for so good an end, and it answered the same principle in the Jews which at that time did prevail with them to let the Apostles alone as to the thing they purposed against them, and so there was a pure principl of God in them all that secretly wrought in them to deliver the Apostles though otherwise they did not believe in it for life and peace. Now let this be your pattern and example which produced such a good effect, Act by this, and walke by this, that you may follow the principle of God in you as your rule to guide you, that your purposes may not stand in wilful resolutions, as not to be easily intreated, for it be so with you there is cause for you to question whether the wisdom from above direct you in your undertakings, and if by that you be not directed you may soon erre in what you doe, nay, you may possibly erre in all you doe, for the wisdom of God is the sure foundation for all laws to stand upon, and be ministered from, and if law stand upon any other thing, or be ministered from any other thing it cannot clearly answer truth and righteousness either in the fountain or stream, for where laws are made and ministered in a wilful resolution and purpose against a thing, the matter is mollly resolvedly prosecuted to accomplish the thing intended, and by such actions and proceedings there is no sufferer can have any benefit of the law for his own right

right in cases of manifest wrong, for where resolution is both rule and law it will carry the stream in its own channel with that force as nothing may stop it and this only law pretended to answer to the resolution and purpose intended.

Well friends, whatsoever you, or any of you may purpose or intend against us called *Quakers*, of this you may be sure that we do not purpose or intend any harm unto you, but really desire that it may be well every way with you, and in this we can approve our selves to God, and it cannot be disproved by you, for ye very well know how we have behaved our selves amongst you and towards you for many years, and you cannot justly charge us with any alteration as to our peaceable life, and civil deportment, but what we have been in love, and peace, and good will amongst you and towards you, we are still the same, for our principle doth not vary and change in its nature and life, and as we are preserved by it, to live in it, we continue in the same mind and you have no cause to be jealous of us as seditious persons, or contrivers of insurrections, or any way such as would do you the least wrong or injury, or any body living, and as we have never offered injury to you, or you received any injury by us, it is certainly below you as men to impute us evil, and we are very sure that wherein you purpose or intend any harm to us with a resolution to perform it that such purpose or intention will be much more against your selves if you do not stop the action, and as you profess Christianity so it will be more honourable to your profession to cease from prosecution than to continue it, that so in your day and time the Righteous and Godly Christians may sit under their own vine, and under their own fig-tree in quietness and peace, for willfull resolutions and purposes never did good unto any, and if you would do good to your selves and the nation then mind humility and the fear of the Lord, for the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom and where wisdom orders there all things goes well, but where wisdom is wanting their all things goes wrong, and therefore it is your greatest concernment to wait for Gods wisdom to order you, for wisdom is better then strength, and if you take counsel as is to be ordered by it then that which is wrong you will be willing to right, and that which is right you will be willing to maintain, and thereby take off all accusations by which the innocent is vexed and troubled, and that will not only bring peace to your own souls but also to the whole nation, and so both your own souls and the nation will have comfort and happiness and there every one will have the benefit of peace as they came to enjoy it, and that is the only end of this *Spiritual*

Presumptionless being set to your eye, that you may look through it and see those things that will do your souls, and the nations good, but if you will shut your eye and not behold by what way good may come unto you, and so follow your resolutions and purposes against the righteous, then will the Lord lift up his arm against you, and when it falls it will come heavy upon you, for the Lord hath often signified his mind unto you by his spirit to have done you good, you have had many tender visitations from the Lords servants in whom his spirit dwelleth, and you have been faithfully warned wherein your own danger hath been concerned, and it is desired that you might regard the Lord and not slight his kindness, for though he be gracious and long suffering yet he doth not yet his judgement aside where his kindness is rejected, and if you strive against him and his power and do not know it, he may in his mercy remit your offence upon your repentance when you do know it, but if ye know that it is the Lord and his power which ye strive against, and that you will maintain your strife against him, then will he come upon you in his own time, and none shall be able to deliver you out of his hand, and that you may not be ignorant that it is the Lord and his power that ye are striving against, wherein you set your selves against his people called *Quakers*, it is hereby signified unto you that it is only the Lord ye strive against in what ye do unto them, for it is only the Lord that hath called them and separated them from the way of men, and appointed them to meet together in his fear to serve and worship him in his spirit, and they hear his greatness and think upon his name, and so keeps his ordinance or observation, and what ye do unto them for their obedience and faithfulness unto God, he takes it as done unto himself, and wherein you strive against them, you strive against him, and this will leave you without excuse in the day when God shall judge the secreters of men, by Jesus Christ, the Lord will have a seed to serve him & worship him, in his own way, when ye have spent your strength to withstand his purpose, and if you will not take notice of *Gemalists* counsel to observe it, yet do not forget how God plagued *Pharaoh* and overthrew him for his hard heartedness, and that may bring you into a holy dread of the living God, and into a humble submission to his light and power in all covenants, and so in time be considerate in these weighty things as men of grave and solid deportments, for here is the truth plainly set before you with great regard and tenderness both to your own souls, and to the nation.

W. S.

THE END.

A Tompkins
1671

W 195

Quakers.

Tompkins (A) An Obituary to the
Parish, called Olives Southwark
(1671)